

MINUTES OF THE FOURTH MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS.

Held November 19, 1910.

MINUTES OF THE FOURTH MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS,

HELD NOVEMBER 19, 1910.

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The fourth meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts, called by the Vice-Chairman, was held in its Office, Room 7, 4th floor, Lemon Building, 1729 New York Avenue, NW., Washington, D. C., on Saturday, November 19, 1910. The meeting was called to order by the Vice-Chairman at 11:30 A. M. There were present the following members of the Commission:-

Mr. Millet, the Vice-Chairman, presiding;

Mr. Olmsted,

Mr. Hastings,

Mr. French,

as well as Colonel Spencer Cosby, the Secretary and Executive Officer. Telegrams received from Mr. Cass Gilbert and Mr. Charles Moore, stating their inability to be present at the meeting, were read by the Secretary.

1. The minutes of the preceding meeting, held Saturday, August 6, 1910, were presented and approved.
2. Upon motion by Mr. French, seconded by Mr. Hastings, the present stationery was approved, and adopted as the permanent official stationery of the Commission.
3. A letter ("A") from Mr. Albert R. Ross, the architect of the Pulaski Statue, in answer to the suggestion made by the Commission at its first meeting relative to making a change in the lettering on the front elevation of the pedestal, was

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1. *Chlorophyll a* (Chl a) and *Chlorophyll b* (Chl b) are the primary photosynthetic pigments in green plants. They are responsible for capturing light energy and converting it into chemical energy through the process of photosynthesis. Chl a is the most abundant pigment, while Chl b is present in smaller amounts. Both pigments are found in the chloroplasts of green plants.

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read, and the letter was ordered placed on file, no further action being considered necessary.

4. A letter ("B") from the Committee representing the District of Columbia Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, Rear Admiral George W. Baird, U. S. N., President, relative to the word "RECLAWICE" appearing on the pedestal of the statue of General Kosciuszko in this City, was read, commented upon, and ordered placed on file.

5. The Secretary presented the following memorandum in regard to the offer of quarters for the Commission of Fine Arts by the Treasury Department,-

" The Supervising Architect of the Treasury has several vacant rooms adjacent to his Office on the 4th floor of the Treasury Building which he thinks the Secretary of the Treasury will be willing to place at the disposal of the Commission of Fine Arts. The Commission would probably be given two good-sized rooms opening into each other, with good light, the windows opening into the interior courtyard of the Treasury. An elevator runs to within a short distance of the rooms though the hallway from the elevator is not at all attractive. If the Commission will occupy these rooms it will be saved the expense of rent and will be in close touch with the Office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury. One possible objection to the arrangement is that the Commission might in time come to be considered as being connected with the Supervising Architect's Office".

The matter was discussed and it was the sense of the Commission that the Secretary should thank the Supervising Architect of the Treasury for the offer, and state informally that, as only four members were present at this meeting, formal action on so important a matter as the question of permanent offices should be delayed until a meeting of the full Commission could be held. In the meantime the Secretary is to ascertain from the War Department whether it will be possible to secure the use of the two rooms adjoining the room at present occupied by the Commission.

and, the Committee has decided to hold a public hearing on this matter.

The Committee has also decided to hold a public hearing on this matter. The hearing will be held on the 15th of the month, at 10:00 a.m. in the main hall of the City Hall. The hearing will be open to the public and will be held in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

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6. The Executive Order of October 25, 1910 ("C"), was read and discussed.

A suggestion by Mr. Millet that it might be advisable to extend the functions of the Commission so as to embrace the passing upon the plans, designs, and sites of all public buildings to be erected in the United States by the National Government which would cost over, say, \$200,000 or \$250,000, received favorable comment, but no formal action was deemed advisable at this time.

7. A letter ("D") from the Commissioners of the District of Columbia, making inquiry as to whether the Commission of Fine Arts would be willing to pass upon the plans of municipal buildings hereafter to be erected in the District of Columbia, was read, and explained by the Secretary. Upon motion by Mr.

Olmsted, seconded by Mr. Hastings, the Secretary was directed to inform the Commissioners of the District of Columbia that the Commission of Fine Arts had received and considered their request and that they will be glad at any time to undertake the duty suggested by the Commissioners in their letter; also that, in accordance with their suggestion, the Commissioners be requested to submit

preliminary drawings, showing at least one elevation and one plan of the contem-

(Amendment in red.) ~~It was suggested that the District Commissioners be requested to submit eight sets of blue prints when possible, in order that blueprints by the District Commissioners be requested in order that each member of the Commission may be able to inspect the plans before the of the Commission may be able to inspect the plans before the next formal meeting of the Commission". (See Exhibit "E").~~

8. A letter ("F") from the General Supply Committee of the Treasury Department, was presented and read, relative to the standardization of Government furniture. After discussion, and upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously decided that the Secretary inform the Committee that until the scope of the matter to be submitted by them can be considered by the Commission of Fine Arts as

1. The Committee has been informed that the Government of India has decided to grant a grant-in-aid to the Government of Madras for the purpose of carrying out the work of the Madras Legislative Council. The grant is to be paid in three instalments of Rs. 10 lakhs each, during the years 1954-55, 1955-56 and 1956-57. The Government of India has also decided to grant a grant-in-aid to the Government of Madras for the purpose of carrying out the work of the Madras Legislative Council. The grant is to be paid in three instalments of Rs. 10 lakhs each, during the years 1954-55, 1955-56 and 1956-57.

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a whole, it is not considered necessary nor desirable for them to appoint a subcommittee to take up the matter, but that the Commission will be glad to accede to the request of the Committee and, when the matter is presented, it will be considered and referred, if necessary, to a subcommittee as suggested. (See Exhibit "G").

9. A letter from Mr. Cass Gilbert ("H"), with accompanying copies of letter and telegrams sent to and received from the Secretary of the Treasury by him, was read by the Secretary, and he was directed to inform Mr. Gilbert that his letter was presented to the Commission and discussed, and that the Commission felt that there was no objection whatever to participation by its members in a Government competition.

10. The programmes of competition, with accompanying plats, for the proposed new buildings for the Departments of Justice, of State, and of Commerce and Labor, were inspected and discussed. It was found that the suggestions of the Commission of Fine Arts, embodied in its letter to the Secretary of the Treasury dated July 9th (extract from which was contained in the program), relative to the northern line of the building to house the Department of Justice had been disregarded, and that the instructions relative thereto, as shown on the plat, were not in accord with the recommendation of the Commission. The Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department was communicated with, and an engagement made with him to meet him in his Office later to discuss the matter.

11. The location of the John Paul Jones Statue was discussed informally, but, as the matter has not been formally presented by the John Paul Jones Statue Commission, no action was taken.

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5-MINUTES.

12. The formal request of the Barry Statue Commission for advice in regard to models for the Barry Statue submitted by Mr. John J. Boyle, and the location of the statue, was presented to the Commission by the Secretary. Letters from the President General of the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, and from the President of the District of Columbia Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, protesting against the placing of the statue of John Paul Jones in conjunction with that of Commodore Barry, were read to the Commission, commented upon and ordered placed on file. A letter from Herman A. Heydt ("I") of New York City, relative to the connection of Andrew O'Connor with the Barry monument, was read by the Secretary. The Secretary was directed to reply by stating that the Commission had no jurisdiction in the matter, and that his letter was ordered placed on file. (See Exhibit "J".)

13. The members present, and Colonel Cosby, then left the Office in a taxicab, and upon their return at 4:40 P. M., the following report was rendered:-

" The Commission made an examination of the Barry model, and of the present site for the John Paul Jones Statue; afterwards went to the Office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department and discussed with him the question of changing the northern limit for the proposed building for the Department of Justice, shown on the blueprint accompanying the program of competition. Mr. Taylor, the Supervising Architect, stated that the Treasury Department would send out a notice to each of the competitors, stating that this northern limit could be extended not more than 100 feet to the north." (See NOTE below.)

14. Upon motion by Mr. French, seconded by Mr. Olmsted, the Secretary was instructed to send the letter attached hereto (see Exhibit K) to the Chairman of the Barry Statue Commission, containing the conclusions of the Commission of Fine Arts relative to the model submitted by Mr. Boyle.

The first thing I noticed when I stepped out of the car was the cold. It wasn't just the temperature, but the way the air felt like a blanket. I had heard that the weather was perfect, but this was something else. I took a deep breath and felt a sense of calm. The city was beautiful, with its mix of old and new architecture. I walked down the street, feeling the cobblestones under my feet. The people were friendly, and I felt like I had found a new home. I had heard that the weather was perfect, but this was something else. I took a deep breath and felt a sense of calm. The city was beautiful, with its mix of old and new architecture. I walked down the street, feeling the cobblestones under my feet. The people were friendly, and I felt like I had found a new home.

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Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned 5:45 P. M.,
Saturday, November 19, 1910, subject to call by the Chairman.

(NOTE: On November 23d the Supervising Architect of the Treasury informed the Secretary of the Commission by telephone that the Assistant Secretary of the Treasury had decided not to send out the notice in regard to the northern limit of the new building for the Department of Justice.)



Colonel, U. S. Army,

Secretary.

Approved:



Vice-Chairman.

New York City,

August 16, 1910.

Mr. George Burnap, Landscape Architect,
Office of Public Buildings and Grounds,
Lemon Bldg., 1729 New York avenue,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

Upon my return to town from a summer vacation, I am in receipt of your favor of July 18th, in reference to the Pulaski Monument pedestal, and do not approve of battering the front or any part of the vertical die of this pedestal. In my first sketches for this pedestal I designed a uniform entasis for this die, which was objected to for good reasons by a competent jury of artists to whom the matter was submitted by the Commission in charge. Battering the front of this pedestal will lead to complications in the plinth above and if seen in ~~the~~ perspective at a 45 degree angle will not be parallel with the vertical line at the right angle corner. My personal opinion is that the variety given by raised letters and incised letters is more interesting than otherwise.

Very respectfully yours,

(Signed) Albert R. Ross,

Architect.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA SOCIETY
OF THE
SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Washington, D. C., 13th October, 1911

The Honorable, the President of the United States.

Mr. President:

The District of Columbia Society of the Sons of the American Revolution begs leave to respectfully invite attention to the word "Reclawice", appearing on the pedestal of the statue of General Kosciuszco, recently erected in the City of Washington, which the Society thinks is not in keeping with the History of the American Revolution, which the statue is intended to commemorate. The word in question refers to a battle between Poland and Russia, in which the Russian army was defeated, and such reference might properly be offensive to Russia, a Nation which has ever been friendly with the United States.

The Society begs leave to suggest that such steps may be taken as, in the wisdom of the President and of Congress, may prevent such an inscription from being regarded as a precedent in the erection of future monuments.

We are, with great respect, your Servants,

COMMITTEE: G. W. Baird, President.
Jno. H. Moore.
A. Howard Clark.

EXECUTIVE ORDER

It is hereby ordered that the plans for no public building to be erected in the District of Columbia for the General Government shall be hereafter finally approved by the officer duly authorized, until after such officer shall have submitted the plans to the Commission of Fine Arts created under the Act of Congress of May 17, 1910, for its comment and advice.

(Signed) Wm. H. Taft.

The White House,

October 25, 1910/

COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
WASHINGTON

November 3, 1910.

Commission of Fine Arts,
Colonel Spencer Cosby, U. S. Army,
Lemon Bldg., Washington, D. C.

Gentlemen;

The District of Columbia constructs annually public buildings costing in excess of five hundred thousand dollars, including school-buildings, fire-engine houses, public convenience stations, and the like.

At present about two-thirds of the buildings are designed by the Municipal Architect and one-third by architects in private practice. The latter are selected by vote of the Washington Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and, for reasons of economy and direct co-operation, the choice has been limited to Washington architects in order that the plans may be prepared "under the supervision" of the Municipal Architect, as required by law.

The Commissioners of the District of Columbia are aware of the fact that the Act approved May 17, 1910, creating the Commission of Fine Arts, contemplated that its attention should be directed toward Government buildings, monuments and statues only, but inasmuch as the municipal structures must add to or detract from the appearance of the city, the Commissioners have the honor to request the Commission's advice and criticism on plans for municipal structures, and would sincerely appreciate any services of this character which the Commission may feel able to render.

It occurs to the Commissioners that some plan might be worked out whereby preliminary drawings showing elevations of proposed buildings might be

passed upon by your body before the plans are prepared in detail. Any suggestions as to procedure which your Commission may make will doubtless be agreeable to us.

In the event that the Commission assents to this request of the Commissioners, they will probably desire to submit some plans of municipal structures for the consideration of the Commission at its early convenience.

Very respectfully,

The Board of Commissioners
of the District of Columbia,

By, (Signed) Cuno H. Rudolph,

President.

WVJ
FCL

November 22, 1910.

Hon. Cuno H. Rudolph,
President, Board of Commissioners
of the District of Columbia,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

At the meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts held on November 19, 1910, careful consideration was given to the letter from the Commissioners of the District of Columbia requesting the advice and criticisms of the Commission of Fine Arts on plans of municipal structures hereafter erected by the District Government.

I am directed by the Commission to inform you that it will be glad to comply with your request and to undertake the duty suggested in your letter. The Commission concurs with your suggestion as to the advisability of submitting to it preliminary drawings, showing at least one elevation and one plan of proposed buildings, before the detail plans are prepared. It is requested that, whenever possible, eight blueprints of each drawing to be considered by the Commission be submitted in order that each member may have a chance to examine them before the next formal meeting of the Commission.

The Commission does not meet at any fixed times, but it is customary for the Chairman to call a meeting whenever there is business of importance to be considered. It is hoped that meetings will be held with sufficient frequency hereafter to prevent any serious delay in the consideration of plans for municipal structures.

Respectfully,

SPENCER COSBY,

Colonel, U. S. Army,
Secretary.

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL SUPPLY COMMITTEE
UNITED STATES EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS
WASHINGTON

November 18, 1910.

Colonel Spencer Cosby,
Secretary, The Art Commission,
Lemon Building,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

The General Supply Committee has under consideration the question of adopting a standard set of office furniture, limited to the ordinary requirements of the clerical work of the Government Departments, the list to include desks, chairs, wardrobes, costumers, letter-press stands, water-cooler stands, book cases, and filing cases.

It is thought that your advice will be valuable on the question of the suitability of the forms and colors to be adopted so that they may harmonize with the general character of the buildings in which they are to be used; in a sense to regard them as an adjunct of the architecture. An expression of opinion by the Commission is desired as to whether the scheme is a proper one, and whether they can give definite advice on the above points when specifications and drawings are submitted to them.

It is believed that if the plan can be put into operation and in addition the permanent woodwork and finish of the buildings be standardized, the result will be as harmonious appearance on the inside as now obtains on the outside of buildings.

In case the Commission approves the suggestion, it is hoped that a subcommittee may be appointed who can pass on the specific questions which will be submitted at an early date.

Very respectfully,

TCSM/cwk

(Signed) T. C. S. Marshall.
Superintendent of Supplies.

November 22, 1910.

Mr. T. C. S. Marshall,
Superintendent of Supplies,
Treasury Department, Washington, D. C.

Sir:

At the meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts on November 19th, 1910, careful consideration was given to your letter of November 18th, asking whether the Commission would be willing to give advice upon the suitability of the forms and colors to be adopted for office furniture for the ordinary requirements of the Government Departments upon the submission to the Commission of specifications and drawings.

The Commission directed me to inform you that it will be glad to accede to your request, but that, for the present, the appointment of a subcommittee, as suggested by you, is not considered advisable. The Commission as a whole still consider the specifications and drawings which you propose to submit to them, but it is not considered necessary nor desirable to appoint a subcommittee until the scope of the work to be undertaken by them has been determined by the Commission.

Respectfully,

SPENCER COSBY,

Colonel, U. S. Army,

Secretary.

SC-ABC

CASS GILBERT
ARCHITECT.

New York, November 17, 1910.

The Commission of Fine Arts,
Washington, D. C.

Sirs:

I transmit herewith for your information, copies of certain correspondence with the Honorable, The Secretary of the Treasury, relative to my entering the competition for a design for a building for the Department of Justice in Washington, D. C.

Respectfully,

(Signed) Cass Gilbert.

A.

Enclosures:

Mr. Gilbert's letter to Secretary of the Treasury dated Nov. 1, 1910.
Night letter dated Nov. 14, 1910, Franklin MacVeagh to Mr. Gilbert.
Mr. Gilbert's letter to Hon. Franklin McVeagh, dated Nov. 15, 1910.

(COPY.)

New York, Nov. 1, 1910.

The Honorable Secretary of the Treasury,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

Referring to the competition for the selection of an architect for a building for the Department of Justice in compliance with the Act approved June 25, 1910, I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the Programme of Competition which has been forwarded to me by the Supervising Architect with a letter of transmission dated Oct. 28th which states that a formal letter of invitation from the Department will be forwarded.

I have already accepted the tentative invitation signed by the Honorable Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, C. D. Hilles, and I desire to enter the competition. In order, however, that no possible question can be raised as to my eligibility in case my design should be accepted by the Government, I wish to call attention to the fact, which is doubtless well known to you, namely, that I am a member of the Commission of Fine Arts established by Act of Congress May 17, 1910, having been appointed by the President. I have already verbally called the attention of Attorney General Wickersham and Assistant Secretary Hilles informally to this subject and both have stated that membership in the Commission of Fine Arts would not operate to prevent me acting as a competitor or as the Architect of public work under the Government. In the event of the selection of my design I suppose I could not pass upon its merits as a member of the Commission of Fine Arts.

It may be a strained and perhaps fantastic point to raise in view of the informal opinions already quoted, but an official and formal decision on this

question now would settle the matter once and for all and it would appear better to have it definitely settled in advance.

I am sure you will understand that appreciating the honor of the President's appointment on the Commission I do not wish to let my private interests, no matter how enticing, interfere in any manner with my service in that capacity, nor on the other hand do I wish to refuse an invitation where the Government desires my services in this other matter. Practically, I am confident that even in the event of my winning the competition there would be no conflict of interest nor any real foundation for objections and I trust that such will be your own decision; nevertheless, I will say in advance that I am content to abide by whatever that decision may be. I am entirely willing to withdraw from the competition if you think necessary. May I suggest that the matter also receive the consideration of the President and the Attorney General, if it appears to you of sufficient importance, and I be notified at an early date of your official decision.

Respectfully,

(Signed) Cass Gilbert.

G/S

New York, Nov. 15, 1910.

Hon. Franklin McVeagh,
Secretary of the Treasury,
Washington, D. C.

My dear Sir:

I have just received your night letter of November 14th relative to my entering the competition for a building for the Department of Justice in Washington and I wish to say that I expect to take the matter up at the meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts which occurs in Washington on the 19th instant and after conferring with them will make a definite decision. In the meanwhile I wish to thank you for the decision rendered in your telegram.

I remain

Respectfully yours,

(Signed) Cass Gilbert.

G/S

(C O P Y).

NIGHT LETTER.

Nov. 14, 1910.

Dated - Washington, D. C. 14.

To - Mr. Cass Gilbert,

11 East 24th St., New York.

I hope you will stay in the Competition for new building Department of Justice and I should consider it most unfortunate if members of Fine Arts Commission should rule themselves out of Government competitions. I think there is no reason why you should not compete and every reason why you should. Pardon delay in answering yours of November 1st. I was away from Washington.

Franklin McVeagh.

November 22, 1910.

Cass Gilbert, Esq.,
11 East 24th street,
New York City.

My dear Mr. Gilbert:

The Commission greatly regretted your inability to be present at the meeting on November nineteenth. I brought to their attention your letter of November seventeenth, transmitting copies of certain correspondence with the Secretary of the Treasury relative to your entering into the competition for a design for a building for the Department of Justice in this city. The Commission directed me to inform you that your letter had been presented and discussed, and that the Commission were unanimously of the opinion that there was no objection whatever to participation by its members in a Government competition.

Yours truly,

SPENCER COSBY,

Colonel, U. S. Army,
Secretary.

SC-ABC

New York, November 14, 1910.

The Commission of Fine Arts,
Colonel Spencer Cosby, U. S. A., Secretary,
Lemon Building, Washington, D. C.

Gentlemen:

In the matter of the proposed statue to the late Commodore Barry, authorized by act of Congress, my attention has been directed that your Commission may act in an advisory capacity to the Barry Statue Commission, and on behalf of Andrew O'Connor, a sculptor who participated in the competition, I desire to submit certain facts for your consideration. It may be that the subject upon which I am addressing you is not within your jurisdiction, but I deem it proper and just that you have some information as to the merits of Mr. O'Connor's cause.

I assume that you are acquainted with the fact of his entry in the competition and of the original model made by him. The Barry Statue Commission at one time had selected Mr. O'Connor's model as the best of all the models submitted in competition, but requested certain changes eliminating prominent architectural features. Photographs of the original model and of the subsequent changes are in my possession and subject to your command at any time. It appears that thereafter definite instructions were given to Sculptor Boyle to submit a model which, if satisfactory, would be acceptable to the Statue Commission and the award be thereupon made to him.

I have learned that the Boyle model has been rejected and that no award has been made to date. From this it would follow that Mr. O'Connor's model in the main still commands attention as the most artistic of all the models submitted to date to the Barry Statue Commission. I have had a personal interview with Col. Cosby and Secy. Meyer, and learn, amongst other things, that the inducing cause for the rejection of the O'Connor model was not, essentially, artistic demerits. It seems, however, that the causes which at one time may have influenced the Barry Statue Commission against the O'Connor model have now in a great measure been removed, and there is no longer any potential force therein.

Col. Spencer Cosby was kind enough to accord me an interview on April 22, 1910, and pointed to certain inartistic features of the O'Connor model, and dwelt upon the fact that Mr. O'Connor was a non-resident, which would, of necessity, hamper the Statue Commission seriously in the execution of the work. I have taken the liberty to write to the Barry Statue Commission of recent date, informing them that Mr. O'Connor is ready to take up his residence at Washington, or where the same may be required, for the purpose of prosecuting the work should the award be made to him, and that we are ready and willing to prepare further models acting under the guidance and instructions of the said Commission.

In other words, in view of the artistic merits of the model submitted, we are willing to do any and everything in order to produce a model, and

finish the statue to the absolute satisfaction of the Statue Commission. I realize that your Commission is simply advisory, and that the selection or rejection of a model is not ultimately within your province. Nevertheless, I have written this letter to explain that any defects which may be apparent to you will be corrected by Mr. O'Connor upon such lines as may be suggested, and for that reason, we feel that a rejection of the model need not necessarily follow by reason of any features which may be unacceptable to the Statue Commission.

I am prepared to appear before your body or before the Statue Commission at any time on behalf of Mr. O'Connor. You will understand that we would not have taken up this matter again were it not for the fact that the Statue Commission reported to Mr. O'Connor on March 31, 1909, that the model submitted by him was placed first in the order of excellence.

Yours respectfully,

(Signed) Herman A. Heydt.

H-H.

November 19, 1910.

Mr. Herman A. Heydt,
27 William street,
New York City.

Sir:

I am directed by the Commission of Fine Arts to acknowledge receipt of your letter of November 14th, explaining the connection of Mr. Andrew O'Connor with the competition for the proposed statue of Commodore Barry to be erected in Washington, and urging that Mr. O'Connor be intrusted with the execution of the work. As the Commission of Fine Arts has no jurisdiction in the matter of the selection of the sculptor, it has directed that your letter be placed on file.

Respectfully,

SPENCER COSEY,

Colonel, U. S. Army,

Secretary.

SC-ABC

